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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

33RD YEAR

December 13, 1976

NO. 50



Compressed yeast is perishable and should be stored in the refrigerator and used within a week according to U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists.

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Fruits, vegetables, or other flavorful foods are often added to cottage cheese to make a variety of side dishes and salads.

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Sprinkle grated cheese over eggs to be baked, or combined with scrambled eggs for a different flavor treat.

* * *

Substitutes may make food more interesting...Ever try making pastry with crushed cereals? Or rice used in place of bread in making poultry stuffing?

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Dry yeast may be stored for several months in a dry, cool place.

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Fresh vegetables are generally highest in quality and lowest in price when in season

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FOOD STAMPS

— AND THE ELDERLY

About 18 million people are getting food stamps in this country, according to the 1975 survey by the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The elderly (65 years of age or older) comprise about six percent of total participants, according to a major survey in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Of the 885,000 households included in the survey, about 17 percent of all households included at least one elderly person.

Elderly persons comprise 42 percent of the one-person households -- a large majority of these were women.

The total deduction claimed by households with elderly members averaged \$46 per month -- more than \$30 below the national average of \$77 per month. Their average gross income was \$223.00 per month, or a net income of \$178.00.

This study on the use of Food Stamps will be used widely within and outside of government. The Food and Nutrition Service plans this to be an annual study.

CONSUMERS AND OPEN DATING

"Open dating" is still misunderstood in many areas. It means different things to different people -- often depending on one's interpretation of the term. It also is strictly a voluntary system. However, legislation has been introduced to make it a more uniform and informative dating system.

A national survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service of over 1,400 food shoppers in the spring of '76 indicates that although there is extensive awareness and use of open dates on food packages shoppers are not very knowledgeable about the meaning of the several kinds of dates used.

Some respondents assume that the "open dates" are throwaway dates. Actually, an "open date" is defined as an easily read and understood calendar date on a food package indicating freshness. It tells either when a product was packaged or processed, when the product should be sold by the store, or when the product should be used by the food shopper.

The term "pull date" (when the item should be removed from the counter) may be prefixed by "sell by" or "exp" instead of a pull date. Four different date prefixes were considered in the recent study.

1. "Packed On" -- the date of manufacturing, processing, or final packaging.
2. "Sell By" -- the last day a retail store may offer the food for sale. This date, however, leaves time for the purchaser to use the product in the home, even if bought on the "pull date".
3. "Use By" or quality assurance date which refers to the peak quality of the food product.
4. "Exp" or expiration date marks the end of the product's useful life or the last day it should be used. It also is used interchangeably with the "pull date".

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK (OCTOBER 1976)

| | Thrifty plan | Low-cost plan | Moderate- cost plan | Liberal plan |
|---|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| FAMILIES | | | | |
| Young couple..... | \$22.20 | \$29.30 | \$36.60 | \$44.20 |
| Elderly couple..... | 20.00 | 26.00 | 32.30 | 38.70 |
| Family of 4 with preschool children..... | 31.60 | 41.20 | 51.30 | 61.80 |
| Family of 4 with elementary school children..... | 38.00 | 49.70 | 62.30 | 75.10 |
| INDIVIDUALS* | | | | |
| Women | | | | |
| 20-54 years..... | 9.10 | 11.90 | 14.80 | 17.80 |
| 55 years and over..... | 8.30 | 10.70 | 13.30 | 15.80 |
| Men | | | | |
| 20-54 years..... | 11.10 | 14.70 | 18.50 | 22.40 |
| 55 years and over..... | 9.90 | 12.90 | 16.10 | 19.40 |
| Children | | | | |
| 1-2 years..... | 5.20 | 6.70 | 8.20 | 9.80 |
| 3-5 years..... | 6.20 | 7.90 | 9.80 | 11.80 |
| 6-8 years..... | 7.90 | 10.30 | 12.90 | 15.50 |
| 9-11 years..... | 9.90 | 12.80 | 16.10 | 19.40 |
| Girls 12-19 years..... | 9.50 | 12.20 | 15.20 | 18.10 |
| Boys 12-14 years..... | 10.60 | 13.70 | 17.10 | 20.60 |
| 15-19 years..... | 11.60 | 15.10 | 18.90 | 22.80 |

* Cost of food at home for any family can be figured by totaling costs shown for individuals by sex and age of various members of the family as follows:

- o For those eating all meals at home (or carrying some meals from home), use amounts shown.
- o For those eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from amount in table for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent or one-fourth the cost shown.
- o For guests, include for each meal eaten, 5 percent of amount shown in table for the proper age group.

Next, adjust the total figure if more or fewer than four people generally eat at the family table. Costs shown are for individuals in 4-person families. Adjustment is necessary because larger families tend to buy and use foods more economically than smaller ones. Thus, for a 1-person family, add 20 percent; 2 persons, add 10 percent; 3, add 5 percent; 4, use as is; 5 or 6, subtract 5 percent; 7 or more, subtract 10 percent.

Note: Single copies of papers describing USDA's thrifty food plan (used in setting the coupon allotment in the Food Stamp Program) and the three more costly plans, on which these costs are based, are available from the Consumer and Food Economics Institute, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Hyattsville, Maryland 20782.

CONSUMERS AND OPEN DATING (CON'T)

The terms "open date," "packed on" and "sell by" were correctly interpreted by 77 percent and 62 percent of the food shoppers. Consumers who most often misinterpret this type of information were over 35 years of age and with incomes under \$10,000 a year.

In another similar survey of 1,400 shoppers throughout the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service found that 90 percent of the shoppers believe prices and freshness on open dates on food packages were very useful. Less than 5 percent regarded them as of little or no use.

Additional information on purchasing habits of consumers will be released within the next few months by USDA.

LIKE CHICKEN LIVERS?

Some do. Some don't. But, if you've not developed a taste for chicken livers this may be the time to do it. There are lots of them around these days. Why? School lunch programs do not include the chicken livers...and the fast food eating places do not use them either. Chicken livers used to be considered a gourmet food -- and still is by some -- and they often are found at cocktail parties.

Chicken livers are a good buy -- they are rich in vitamin A, iron, B vitamins and other nutrients.

FOOD and HOME NOTES, a weekly newsletter directed to mass media outlets, is published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Communication, Washington, D.C. 20250. Editor: Shirley Wagener...Phone: 202-447-5898.
